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DEPARTMENT FOR CA/OCS, DS/IP/AF, DS/RD/AF
FRANKFURT FOR RCO

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TAGS: PREL CASC ASEC MR

SUBJECT: NOUAKCHOTT WARDEN MEETING DISCUSSES GENERAL
SECURITY

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 484

Classified By: Ambassador Mark M. Boulware for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (SBU) Following up on the last Mission EAC (REFTEL), the Ambassador hosted a July 23 Consular Wardens Meeting to discuss general security concerns shared by Nouakchott's American citizen (AmCit) community. The invitation was extended to official and unofficial AmCits, as well as those associated with Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) located in Nouakchott. Official Americans in attendance included the Ambassador, DCM, RSO, Consular Officer and PD Officer.

¶2. (SBU) The Ambassador stated that the purpose of this Warden Meeting was to ensure that AmCits were aware of the existing guidance available to them, provided by the US Government, regarding specific security concerns within Mauritania, as well as to provide general information regarding good personal security practices that should be used while living overseas.

¶3. (SBU) Various attendees requested information regarding the Chris Leggett murder investigation and what they (attendees) needed to do to ensure their personal safety. RSO advised that Mauritanian police were indicating, with certainty, that the two suspects apprehended after the July 17th shoot-out in Ksar District, were, in fact, the two responsible for Chris Leggett's death. RSO further advised that, according to Mauritanian authorities, both suspects had offered their full confessions to the murder, and the weapon used in the murder had been recovered, along with an explosives-laden belt (allegedly worn by one of the suspects). RSO added that LEGATT Rabat and RSO were coordinating with the Mauritanian Prosecutor's Office to obtain all evidence for comparison and analysis.

¶4. (SBU) RSO followed up with numerous daily security habits and practice recommendations for the attendees, to include: varying times and routes to work, keeping doors (residence/vehicle) locked and windows closed, remaining alert to what is happening around you at all times, leaving yourself an exit while in traffic, scheduling random days for shopping, errands, and personal needs, not giving out your personal information (name, address etc.), and ensuring all family members are briefed on security measures listed on the Personal Security Self-Assessment Checklist. An additional copy of the Personal Security Self-Assessment Checklist (PSSA) was provided to all those in attendance. In addition, all were briefed on the importance of applying the PSSA when attending any of the numerous expatriate recreational sites around Nouakchott, to include, but not limited to, the French Cultural Center, Shenkers, Racing Club, and Equinoxe.

¶5. (SBU) DCM and Consular Officer also briefed the group on the importance for all American citizens to register with the Embassy in order to receive timely Warden Messages and/or SMS

cellular text messages in the event of an emergency. DCM and Consular Officer also reminded everyone present that although Warden and SMS messages are generated as quickly as possible, the language contained in both must still be cleared by the Department of State prior to being disseminated. In the absence of immediate security-related information, all were encouraged to communicate with the Post 1 Marine Security Guard and/or Regional Security Office.

¶6. (C) Comment: Mr. Leggett was a key member of the small private American community in Mauritania and his death has affected many deeply. Much of the rest of the American community does community-based humanitarian work with a religious undertone. Those with the strongest religious affiliation are concerned that Mr. Leggett may have been targeted solely for his religious activities. We are seeing several long-term resident Americans deciding to take extended vacations as they evaluate whether to stay on in Mauritania. End Comment.

BOULWARE